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# **Reformulating prior speaker's turn in Finnish: Turn-initial *siis*, *eli(kkä)*, and *nii(n) et(tä)*<sup>1</sup>**

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## *Abstract*

This chapter examines the Finnish particles *siis*, *eli(kkä)* and *nii(n) et(tä)* when they occupy the turn-initial position. The chapter focuses on the use of these particles when they preface a single type of action, a reformulation of the prior speaker's turn or more extended stretch of talk. In contrast to reformulations without a prefacing particle, the particles are used for contextualizing the turn by displaying their speaker's stance vis-à-vis the action being done. It will be shown that while the prefaces share a range of characteristics, most importantly making an explicit link to the prior talk and projecting a reformulation to come, each of them displays a distinctive epistemic stance (e.g. degree of certainty; basis of the reformulation). The chapter sets the turn-initial use of the particles in relation to their other types of usages and etymology.

## *Keywords*

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turn-initial particle, turn preface, reformulation of prior talk, candidate understanding, anaphoric link, stance taking, epistemic stance, Finnish, particle *siis*, particle *eli(kkää)*, particle *nii(n) et(tä)*

## 1. Introduction

In understanding actions implemented by turns-at-talk, key resources that participants make use of include the sequential position of the turn (the type of action that it follows, with all the relevancies that action sets for the subsequent talk), its position within a possible larger activity, its design (verbal and phonetic-prosodic), as well as associated and concurrent embodied actions. The design of turn-beginnings is a key locus of social interaction, as the turn-beginning forms a place for indicating how the unfolding turn relates to the preceding one and to the larger on-going activity, as well as projecting the kind of turn started. A central practice for implementing such an indication is to start the turn with a preface. This chapter offers an analysis of the role of the turn-initial particles *siis*, *eli(kkää)* and *nii(n) et(tä)* in Finnish interaction. These particles are analyzed as design features of turns that offer a reformulation of the prior speaker's turn or part of it, to be minimally confirmed or disconfirmed by that prior speaker.

Reformulating what the other said and meant brings out a speaker's need to check and assure here and now a shared understanding.

Reformulations can take different shapes and they can stand in different types of relationship to the prior talk. A speaker can, for example, draw attention to a trouble with the prior speaker's turn by providing a candidate understanding of some element in it. Such other initiations of repair (in contrast to open class repair initiators such as *what*, Drew 1997) claim that the speaker has a grasp of what the other meant but still needs to get a confirmation (or disconfirmation) of that understanding (see e.g. Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977, 368, 378–379; Heritage 1984, 318–320; Ochs 1988, 134–135; Luke 1990, 74–81; Kurhila 2006, ch. 5; Kushida 2011; Antaki 2012; Kitzinger 2013, 249; Dingemanse and Enfield 2015; Dingemanse et al. 2015). Voicing one's –understanding of the other's prior talk can also be done by utterance types that, instead of initiating repair, summarize, develop the gist of the prior talk, etc. Actions of this type, termed formulations, can target a longer segment of prior talk, not just the prior turn. As compared to repair initiators, they are often more independent from the prior talk in their design and their structure. (Heritage and Watson 1979; Heritage 1985; Drew 2003; Weiste and Peräkylä 2013.) In this chapter, I will use the term reformulation to capture the fact that in one way or another, the recipient says in another way what the prior speaker said, including explicating an implication in the prior talk (see Deppermann 2015, 70).

The following two examples show an instance of reformulating the prior turn without a turn-initial particle. In example (1), the recipient provides a candidate understanding of who was referred to by the prior speaker with the pronoun *niit* ‘them’ in his question. Thus contrary to the prior speaker’s assumption, the recipient displays that the reference was not clear to him. In the second example, the recipient of a possible pre-invitation seeks clarification by providing an understanding of the day in question, not mentioned by the prior speaker (see Hayashi and Hayano 2013, proffering insertable elements).

(1) [KA Sg 096\_06]

01 Ville: -> mon-ta-s    **niit-t**            on        kaiken kaikkiaa, hh  
                  many-PAR-CLI   DEM3.PL-PAR   be.3SG   all.in.all  
                  how many are **they** altogether, hh

02 Kalle: => **poik-i-i**,=  
                  son-PL-PAR  
                  **sons**

03 Ville:        =sisaruksia,  
                  =siblings,

04                (5.7)

05 Kalle:        viis,  
                  five,

06 Ville:        m-hm, aikamoine (.) lauma.  
                  mh-hm, quite (.) a herd.

07 Kalle:        o:n.  
                  is

08                (0.3)

09 Ville:        onks ne kaikki mukana siinä,  
                  are they all involved in the,

(2) [KA Sg 151]

01 Milla: -> =mi-tä työ tee-tte illa-lla,  
what-PAR you.PL do-2PL evening-ADE  
=what will you be doing in the evening

02 Miia: => tänään,?  
today

03 Milla: nii,  
Yes.

04 Miia: e-n osaa sano-a yhtää.  
NEG-1SG can say-INF at.all  
can't tell at all.

05 soit-el-la-a.  
call-FRE-PASS-4  
let's call.

The examples above present minimal cases of a reformulation, as the turn merely offers an understanding of the element in the prior turn that the speaker seeks to clarify (in line 2 in both examples). The understanding of the second turn as a reformulation relies on the interplay between the design of the turn and the relevance of that design in this sequential environment. Turns of this type are typically contiguous in the data, that is, they are produced right after their target turn.

In their study of next turn repair initiators, Haakana et al. (2016) provide statistical information on the design of different types of repair initiators in Finnish everyday interactions. In their data (37,5 hours), 135 of the total 522 repair initiators were candidate understandings, turns that contained interrogative elements or were located in a sequential or activity context where they were interpreted as looking for elaboration. The authors

state that the use of candidate understandings in their data falls roughly in the following three groups: i) requesting clarification of something that the prior speaker has presented as known to the recipient; ii) seeking elaboration on some detail that was not mentioned in the prior turn; and iii) presenting an inference on the basis of the prior turn or longer segment of prior talk. Analysis of the relationship between these usages and the prefaces, however, fell mostly outside of the focus of the study by Haakana et al. Well over half of the candidate understandings, altogether 82 cases, had a turn-initial particle (9 of them had also a turn-final particle, in all cases the particle *vai* ‘or’). Only 35 candidate understandings were without a prefacing particle.<sup>2</sup> The far most common preface (N=52) in their data was the change-of-state particle *ai* (see Koivisto 2013; 2015; 2016). The other prefacing particles were *siis* (N=11), *niin* (N=12) and a small number of other particles (N=4, which contains 2 instances of *eli*).<sup>3</sup>

As examples (1) and (2) show, prefacing a reformulation of the other’s prior talk is optional. What are speakers doing then when, instead of a minimal turn design, as in examples (1) and (2) above, they preface their turn with a particle? Prior research has drawn attention to prefacing as a general way of making a link to a trouble source from which the candidate understanding has become separated (*you know* in English, Benjamin 2012; 2013). Other aspects brought up are indexing the intersubjective vs.

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<sup>2</sup> The rest of the cases had a final particle (N=9; in all the cases the particle was *vai* ‘or’).

<sup>3</sup> The two other cases were the particle chains *eli siis* and *mut* ‘but’ *siis*.

unilateral and subjective character of reformulations (*also* vs. *dann* in German, Deppermann 2015), and marking the articulation of a missing element in the co-participants prior turn (*and* in English, Bolden 2010). The relationship between formulations in different institutional settings and their setting-relevant design is a topic that has received interest for quite some time (Heritage 1985; Drew 2003; Koivisto and Voutilainen 2016).

In the following example from Haakana et al. (2016), a candidate understanding is prefaced with the particle *ai* (line 4). It targets a person reference form in an informing, and it replaces the name of the person with a category term.<sup>4</sup> The turn is produced as a second uptake to the informing, and its *ai* preface can be heard as indexing a realization of the referent at the moment of its production.

### (3) Uunon vaimo [Haakana et al. 2016, 277]

01 Leena:	->	mut <b>maritta raita</b> o-ng kuol-lu but 1NAME.F 2NAME be-3SG die-PTCP.PST but <b>Maritta Raita</b> has died
02 Riita:		ol-i-ko be-PST.3SG-Q was she
03 Viivi:		[ ( - - )
04 Minna:	=>	[ <b>ai uuno-n vaimo</b> PRT 1NAME.M-GEN wife [ <b>AI Uunos' wife</b>
05 Riitta:		niin (.) vaikka minä kyllä m: muista-n PRT PRT I PRT remember-1SG yes (.) although I do remember

<sup>4</sup> The person referred to was an actress; one of her most popular roles was the role as Uuno's wife in a series of movies where the main character was Uuno Turhapuro.



This chapter focuses on three turn prefaces, the particles *siis*, *eli(kkä)* and *nii(n) et(tä)*. The most common preface *ai*, which indexes a change-of-state, has been left out in order to tackle the above mentioned three prefaces whose usages have previously been difficult to untangle. The current data contains 42 instances, mainly from telephone conversations, partially overlapping with the data by Haakana et al. (2016). Of these cases, 16 are *siis*, 14 *nii(n) et(tä)* and 12 *eli(kkä)*.

It will be shown that the three particles focused on (*siis*, *elikkä*, and *nii(n) että*) share a range of characteristics. They explicitly make a link to the prior talk. Likewise, they all project more to come, and more specifically, they set up an expectation that what is to come is a reformulation of prior talk. Each preface, however, displays a distinctive epistemic stance that the speaker is taking (Heritage 2012a; b). In doing so each turn-preface frames and contextualizes the reformulation differently, with regard to dimensions such as the certainty of the understanding offered and the basis on which the reformulation is arrived at.

## 2. *Siis*-prefacing

### 2.1 Background

Reference grammars and dictionaries of Finnish describe *siis* generally as adverb or conjunction that connects clauses, larger units and parts of a clause, indicating that what follows is a consequence or conclusion inferred from the previous (NS s.v. *siis*; KS s.v. *siis*; A. Hakulinen et al. 2004 § 1132). It is also used to mark an explanation that specifies something just said (e.g. A. Hakulinen et al. 2004 § 1132). *Siis* thus looks back and links to the prior talk or written text. In etymological descriptions of Finnish, *siis* is described as an old lative case (directional case) of the demonstrative pronoun *se* ‘it; that’, which is the main anaphoric, backward linking element in Finnish (L. Hakulinen 1999[1951], 66; SSA s.v. *siis*).

The above mentioned usages are illustrated by Hakulinen and Couper-Kuhlen (2015, 112–113) with the following examples.

(4) [Slightly modified from A. Hakulinen and Couper-Kuhlen 2015, 112–113]

a. Ajattelen, **siis** olen ole-ma-ssa  
 think-1SG PRT be-1SG be-3INF-INE  
 X, **SIIS** Y  
 I think, therefore I am

b. Kello on yksi, on **siis** jo aika lähte-ä  
 hour be-SG3 one be-SG3 PRT already time leave-INF  
 X, Y- **SIIS** -Y  
 It's one o'clock, so it's time to leave

c. Tapa-si-n Anna-n, **siis** Jussi-n serku-n  
 meet-PST-1SG 1NAME.F-ACC PRT 1NAME.M-GEN cousin-ACC  
 X, **SIIS** Y  
 I met Anna, that is, Jussi's cousin

Schematically the examples can be presented as follows (A. Hakulinen and Couper-Kuhlen (idem. 113).

X = the premise (a-b) or the explainable (c)

*siis*

Y = the conclusion (a-b) or the explanation (c)

(a clause or an NP drawing conclusions from/elaborating/explaining X)

A usage not described in grammars and dictionaries is a stance-related *siis*-prefacing discussed by Hakulinen and Couper-Kuhlen (2015). In these cases, *siis* regularly prefacing an emotive TCU, introducing ‘my side’ talk about the feelings and experiences by the speaker, for example, in disagreement environments.

## 2.2 Prefacing reformulation with *siis*

When prefacing a reformulation of the prior speaker’s talk, *siis* looks both backward and forward. With the *siis* preface the speaker indexes that the turn just started is connected to and operates on co-participant’s prior talk, so that it provides a reformulation of that prior talk. The specific contribution of *siis* is that it projects a conclusion of some kind that the speaker has drawn from the co-participant’s prior talk. The reformulation is a result of an inferencing process which has progressed while the co-

participant's turn or longer stretch of talk has unfolded through revisions or incrementally. In the context of understandings that are based on inferencing and are at best probable, the *siis* preface may intensify its speaker's less knowledgeable stance (see Heritage 2012b). The degree of contiguity of the *siis*-prefaced turn with the turn it targets and the scope of the *siis*-prefaced turn varies. In this sense, *siis*-prefaced turns have affinities with the *you mean* -prefaced turns in English conversation studied by Benjamin (2012; 2013, ch. 7).

In the following example, the *siis*-prefaced turn in line 5 responds to its immediately preceding turn. However it offers a reformulation of a description of a piece of cooking equipment that the prior speaker produced haltingly and with revisions. The *siis*-prefaced reformulation contains interrogative elements that display its speaker's uncertainty about the accuracy of the reformulation – the speaker portrays herself as being in a less knowledgeable position (see Heritage 2012a; b).

In the segment, Anna is telling her grown-up daughter Jaana about a birthday present that Mervi, Jaana's sister, asked Anna to order for the father, to be given by her (Mervi, lines 1–4). The topic was brought up by Anna ('by the way about the birthday'), and as a response Jaana posed a question about plans for a present. The description of Mervi's present makes relevant an assessment by Jaana. Instead, she responds (after receiving Anna's turn as new information) with a *siis*-prefaced understanding of the present referred to (line 5).

(5) [KA Sg074:3-4, telephone]

01 Anna: ja tuota: #e# sama-ssa yhtteyve-ssä Mervi  
and PRT same-INE connection-INE 1NAME.F  
and um: er in the same occasion Mervi

02 -> sano että tilloo häne-lle-nnis semmonen,  
say.PST.3SG that order.IMP 3SG.HUM-ALL-CLI DEM3.ADJ  
said ((to me)) that do order to her too like

03 -> (0.4) ähh semmonen ↑p<sub>ak</sub>ki mi-tä- mi-llä  
DEM3.ADJ pot which-PAR which-ADE  
(0.4) ehh like a ↑pot which- with which

04 -> nuotio-lla keitet-tä-ä. kannelline.  
camp.fire-ADE cook-PASS-4 lidded  
one cooks at campfire. a lidded one.

05 Jaana: => .khh Ah<sub>aa</sub>. siis tuommone maasto-keitin-kö [vai.]  
PRT PRT DEM2.ADJ field-cooker-Q or  
.khh AH<sub>AA</sub>. SIIS like a camp cooker [or ]

06 Anna: -> [ ]  
[Nii.]  
[yes ]

07 niin se-n antta-a Mervi ja Pera.  
so DEM3-GEN give-3SG 1NAME.F and 1NAME.M  
so it will be given by Mervi and Pera

08 Anna?: ((rustling paper?))  
----- (0.3) -----

09 Jaana: Mut se-hä on hyvä.  
but DEM3-CLI be.3SG goood  
But that's good

10 Anna: ↑Se on (ni) (mi-) ja mä sa]noin että sillä ei]j  
↑It is (I-) and I said that he doesn't

11 Jaana: [Joo:, ]  
Yeah

12 Anna: oo että se sillä yhellä .hhh kuluneella  
have ((one)) that he is cooking with a .hhh worn-out

13 kattilalla la- keittää josta aina aa raataripa,  
pot ? where ((hangs)) always aa an iron handle

14 ö raatalan[gasta  
er from an iron wire  
[

15 Jaana: => [>.hhh Ai niin siis se semmonen k- uk  
PRT PRT PRT DEM3 DEM3.ADJ  
>.hhh Ai NIIN SIIS the one like ?k- ?uk

16 => niinku p- kat:tila tai pan:nu että ei  
PRT pot or pan PRT NEG.3SG  
like p- pot or pan so ((it)) isn't

17 => [oo semmonen keitin.  
be DEM3.ADJ cooker  
[like a cooker  
[

18 Anna: [(Nii.)

19 O[-n:.  
be-3SG  
((It) is.  
[

20 Jaana: [°varsinaisesti.° .h[hh  
[°really.° .h[hh  
[

21 Anna: [Nii ei kei:ti.=  
[PRT NEG.3SG cooker  
[Yes not a cooker

22 Jaana: =Ei semmonem mis [o-n polttoaine] ja,  
NEG.3SG DEM3.ADJ where be-3SG fuel and  
=Not one that has fuel and,  
[ ]

23 Anna: [Ei:: ]  
[No ]

24 Jaana: [hhh  
[

25 Anna: [>Semmonen että nuotijjo-on pan-na-an,  
DEM3.ADJ that log.fire-ILL put-PASS-4  
[>One that is placed on the fire

26 Jaana: .h ↑Joo[joo.h  
.h ↑Yeah [yeah  
[

27 Anna: [Ku armmeija-ssa o-n [näi-tä  
PRT army-INE be-3SG DEM3.PL-PAR  
[Like there are these mess bowls in the army  
[

28 Jaana: [.hhhh

29 Anna: pakk-ia.  
mess.bowl-PAR

30 Jaana: Joo:. M't ↑tuohan o hyvä idea,hh  
Yeah:. But that's a good idea

31 Anna: Nin tuota Mervi ja Pera antaa sen ja sitte ---

So um Mervi and Pera will be giving it and then ---

The turn targeted by the reformulation in line 5 indicates that its speaker Anna needs to search a characterization of the present. Anna repeats the premodifier used for introducing and characterizing referents (*semmonen* ‘that kind of; like’, lines 2–3); unpacks the traditional and colloquial reference form *pakki* (‘mess kit’; KS s.v. *pakki*) by describing its use<sup>5</sup>, instead of treating this category name as a sufficient reference; and she adds a further characteristic of the equipment (*kannelline* ‘lidded’) as an increment.

The *siis*-preface indexes that the turn links back and that some kind of reformulation of prior talk has started. The turn targets the noun phrase in the prior turn (line 2, starting from *semmonen* on). In this context, *siis* is a key element in the turn design to mark that the reformulation is an inference presenting a conclusion from the prior turn.

The noun phrase (*tuommone maastokeitinkö*) in the reformulation contains a premodifier *tuommone*, indexing that the interpretation of the referent is still open and ongoing (Etelämäki 2009), and *maastokeitin* (‘camp cooker’; lit. ‘field cooker’) presents a conclusion from Anna’s description with a concise term, a compound noun. It can be heard as more modern, technical and categorical than the colloquial term *pakki*. The noun *keitin* is typically used for referring to cookware etc. that is operated by

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<sup>5</sup> A prototypical *pakki* is a mess kit developed for military usage. *Pakki* is developed from the mess kit used by the German army (<https://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenttäkeittoastia>)

electricity, gas or fuel (pots, electric coffee makers or water boilers, etc.; KS s.v. *keitin*; Internet search “keitin”).<sup>6</sup> The certainty of the inference is downgraded through marking the turn as a question with the interrogative clitic particle *-kö* attached (suffixed) to the noun 'field cooker', and with the finally-positioned question particle *vai* (see Koivisto 2017; on Swedish *eller*, Lindström 1997, ch. 3; on English Drake 2015).

The reformulation is confirmed in terminal overlap by Anna (line 6; Jefferson 1984). The speaker continues her turn as a separate prosodic unit, to restate who will give the present, mentioning now also Jaana's sister's partner (Pera). The nature of the present is thus confirmed and treated as having no need of elaboration. With the continuation of her turn, Anna then returns to where she started her turn in line 1, implying the relevance of an uptake by her recipient (see Schegloff 2011), and Jaana offers a positive assessment of the present to be given by her sister (line 9). However the discussion of the cooking vessel continues as Anna, after having agreed with Jaana's assessment, elaborates on the issue with an account for the need of the present by detailing her husband's current equipment (10, 12–14).<sup>7</sup>

The elaboration supplies resources permitting Jaana to revise her understanding. She first displays recollection (*ai nijn*), responding to Anna's

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<sup>6</sup> On the basis of an internet search, *maastokeitin* is not used as a term when advertising camping and field cooking equipment, whereas *pakki* is.

<sup>7</sup> In so doing Anna here, after her daughter's positive assessment of the present, implies that she might have been the prime mover in the selection of Mervi's present.



description of her husband's current practice (see Koivisto 2013). She then moves to a *siis*-prefaced turn-constructive unit, and presents her revised understanding as alternative categories *kattila* 'pan' and *pannu* 'pot', marked as recognizable and as shared knowledge (the determiner *se*, line 15), followed by an explicit exclusion of the category she had mentioned (*keitin*). While the presentation of the revised understanding is confirmed with slight delay by Anna (*Nii.*, line 18; Sorjonen 2001, 58–72), she rejects the exclusion of *keitin* (line 19), only to accept its exclusion soon (line 21). This leads to further search for an intersubjective understanding of the cooking vessel, ending with another assessment by Jaana, and Anna's return to her main line of talk (lines 30–31).<sup>8</sup>

In the previous example the *siis*-prefaced reformulation in line 5 contained design features – interrogative elements and a pre-modifier indicative of a still-open-interpretation – that displayed the speaker's uncertainty and relative lack of knowledge of the referent. In designing her reformulation in such a way, the speaker displayed a less knowledgeable epistemic stance concerning what the co-participant had talked about. The turn-initial *siis* contributes to that epistemic stance. By indexing that the reformulation is a conclusion and thereby a result of a process of inferencing it adds to the speaker's display of a less knowledgeable epistemic stance. Subsequently (lines 15–17), the speaker produces another

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<sup>8</sup> Even though Jaana uses the same assessment term (*hyvä* 'good'), she designs her assessments differently. In the latter case (line 30) she evaluates the present as a 'good **idea**', which can be heard as a slightly reserved assessment.

*siis*-prefaced reformulation which voices a realization and a revised understanding.

In the following extract, the *siis*-prefaced turn (line 10) seeks to clarify a person reference form construction used by the prior speaker. The reformulation is provided with one word, and it contains no elements of uncertainty and lack of knowledge. However, the person reference that is the target of the reformulation has been produced incrementally through a longer segment of prior talk. Raija is coming to town, and in searching for a time to see her co-participant Tiina, she enumerates the commitments she already has. In relation to a visit to a travel agency, she mentions a trip to be made with some others (line 4, 'we will go to Reykjavik'), marked as parenthetic prosodically. She subsequently specifies a co-traveller but treats her as non-recognizable to Tiina (with the modifier *yhen*, see Vilkuna 1992, 31–36; Juvonen 2005; 'somebody called Saija', line 6). A little later Tiina responds with a *siis*-prefaced candidate understanding (line 9).

(6) [KA Sg s6 b\_08:3]

01 Raija:	Sit mu-ll on ilta-päivä-n ohjelma-ssa että	
	then I-ADS be.3SG night.day-GEN program-INE that	
	Then I have in the afternoon program that	
02	pitää käy-vä ↑matka-toimisto-ssa,	
	need go trip-office-INE	
	((I)) need to go to the travel agent	
03 Tiina:	Mm[: , ]	
	[ ]	
04 Raija: ->	[↓Me lähe-tä-än R]ejkjaviiikki-in,	
	we leave-PASS-4 CITY.NAME-ILL	
	[↓We will go to R]eykjavik	

The timing and sequential placement of the reformulation suggests that it targets the talk in lines 4 and 6. What is emerging through that talk is

the construction [*me* ‘we’ with X]. The reference of the 1st person plural pronoun *me* ‘we’ can be understood here in different ways. At the point of its production, it is understood to refer to Raija and one or more other persons. However, after line 6 (‘with somebody called Saija’), it can be understood in two different ways. It can refer to a group that contains minimally the speaker (Raija) and some unnamed person but excludes the person mentioned by her name, here *Saija*. Alternatively, it can refer to a group that contains minimally the speaker and the person mentioned by name (*Saija*).

The understanding provided by the recipient is the latter one. Tiina’s turn consists of a single word, the second person singular pronoun *sinä* ‘you’ with an accent on the first syllable. With this design Tiina displays her understanding that it is Raija and Saija who will make the trip.<sup>9</sup> The reformulation by itself contains no elements of uncertainty. However, prefacing the reformulation with *siis* brings to the turn an element that marks the reformulation as a result of an inferencing process. In doing so, it brings to the reformulation an element of uncertainty.

The inference is confirmed by Raija first with *nii* (line 10), and subsequently, in the same prosodic unit, with an explication of the travellers. At that point, the speaker of the reformulation conveys the

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<sup>9</sup> This inference excludes an option that *me* ‘we’ refers to Raija and her husband, a reference that in my experience appears to be offered as relevant in many situations. Subsequently in the call, Raija rejects Tiina’s invitation to a party on the basis that her husband will go for a trip to a southern holiday resort before her trip with Saija.

sufficiency of information with a reduplicated *joo joo* response (Kunnari 2011). However, Raija continues by elaborating on the trip with an account of its timing in her private calendar (Sacks 1992, 36–38). Shortly after that they move back to the larger on-going activity, planning when to meet.

In both extracts, the *siis*-prefaced turn sought a clarification of a referring expression in the co-participant's turn with a reformulation. In both cases, the understanding was confirmed by the recipient. The reformulation was non-contiguous with its target: i) It was started only after its speaker had received the talk by the co-participant as new information, and in example (6) also only after the co-participant had moved to a summary of her talk (line 8). ii) The trouble source was a description of a referent for which a single category term was not sufficient (ex. (5)), or it resulted from an unfolding longer segment of talk through several turns (ex. (6)). By prefacing her turn with *siis*, the recipient indexed that the turn started is a reformulation, and in both cases, the understanding presented a conclusion that resulted from a process of inferring.

Contrary to the preceding two examples, the *siis*-prefaced turn may serve to unpack the co-participant's prior turn instead of offering a conclusion – thus working in an opposite fashion. In the following extract, the speaker is using a *siis*-prefaced turn to seek clarification of a reference to a game by describing some of the constitutive game-actions (lines 6–7). Three high school pupils, sitting at a kitchen table, eating pizza and doing their homework, are talking about performing arts lessons at school. Milja

(7) [KA Sg 120\_A\_50\_60: 5–6]

06 Oona: => siis se et kaikki istuu tuole-i-lla  
PRT DEM3.NOM that all sit.3SG chair-PL-ADE  
SIIS that all sit on the chairs (('SIIS the thing that all sit...))

07 => ja sit (.) %siirry-tä-ä aina sillee,%  
and then move-PASS-4 always DEM3.MAN  
and then (.) %('people'/'we') move always like %  
%fwd-moving gestures with RH index  
finger

08 Milja: mm: ,

09 Oona : ɛjooɬ, **ɛyeahɬ**

10 + (0.3)  
oona ->+turns back at her textbook

11 Milja: se o jotekii hausk[a-a.]  
DEM3 be.3SG somehow fun-PAR  
**it is somehow fun**

12 Oona: [ se ] o  
[it ] is

During Milja's turn, Oona is gazing down at her textbook and Lotta is concentrating on eating pizza. Milja repairs the name of the game by replacing it with another ('double burger' → 'sandwich', lines 2 and 4).

Oona turns her head and gaze to Milja and responds with a turn starting with *siis*. The evolving turn offers an understanding of the game Milja named and referred to. That understanding specifies the referent and demonstrates Oona's independent knowledge of the game by describing some of its constitutive actions.

Oona moves from *siis* to what can be called a projector phrase (*se et*, lit. 'it that'), a phrase that projects a description that will be recognizable to the recipient (see Laury, Suomalainen, and Vatanen 2017). The phrase is structurally fitted to the prior turn: the demonstrative pronoun *se* (line 6) is in the nominative case as are the name(s) of the game. It is followed by a specification of the game, first with a description of the starting position of its participants, then the way they are supposed to move. In describing the moving verbally, Oona simultaneously characterizes the movements forward with her right index finger.

The *siis*-prefaced reformulation gets a confirmation by Milja (line 8) but contrary to the two previous extracts, Milja does not elaborate on her confirmation. The confirmation is followed by a post-confirmation

acknowledgement by the reformulation speaker Oona, so neither of them takes a more substantial turn. After a slight delay, Milja, who has not yet received a response to her evaluation, repeats her evaluation, but downgrades it by implying that the basis of the evaluation is not clear to her (*jotenki* ‘somehow’). In overlap, the speaker of the reformulation, Oona, responds with an upgraded positive evaluation of the game, orienting to the downgrade as implying a need for a stronger responsive evaluation.

In all the cases, the *siis*-prefaced turn has sought confirmation for an understanding of what the co-participant had referred to in her or his prior turn(s). The referents in these cases were relatively concrete and bounded in the sense that they were a physical object (cookware), the identity and number of one’s companion(s) during a trip, and types of constitutive actions of a game. The prior speaker, however, was searching for a reference form (ex. (5)), the description of the referent was incremental and spread over several turns (ex. (6)), and/or the assumption of shared knowledge turned out to be wrong and in need of specification (ex. (5)). In two cases (ex. (5) and (7)) the candidate understanding targeted a central reference form in the prior turn that had made an assessment of the referent relevant by the recipient (the *siis*-speaker), whereas in one case (ex. (6)), the target of the reformulation was an element that was part of a side segment in the on-going activity.



### 3. *Eli(kkä)*-prefacing

#### 3.1 Background

*Eli*, and its more elaborated variant *elikkä*, is described by dictionaries and grammars as a coordinate conjunction that typically connects synonyms or words that are used in the context as meaning equivalents.<sup>10</sup> It can also mark a paraphrase or an alternative point of view. (NS s.v. *eli*; SMS s.v. *eli*; KS s.v. *eli*; A. Hakulinen et al. 2004 § 1031.) The following cases illustrate these usages.

#### (8) [KS s.v. *eli*]

- a. 24 kpl **eli** 2 tusinaa  
24 items **ELI** 2 dozens
- b. Päivää aikaisemmin **eli** keskiviikkona.  
A day earlier **ELI** on Wednesday.
- c. Äänten laskussa todettiin virhe,  
A mistake was detected in counting the votes,  
**eli** vaali jouduttiin uusimaan.  
**ELI** the election had to be rearranged

When occupying an initial position of a sentence, TCU or a turn, *eli* is described as indexing a paraphrase or an inference from the prior text, or from one's own or the co-participant's prior turn (see Sorjonen 2001; A.

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<sup>10</sup> The dictionary of modern standard Finnish describes the longer form *elikkä* as colloquial (KS s.v. *elikkä*). No clear differences between the use of the two forms have been detected so far.

Hakulinen et al. 2004: § 1031; Kurhila 2006, ch. 5.2.; Koivisto and Voutilainen 2016).<sup>11</sup> It also prefates turns and TCUs that provide a “translation” from one framework to another. In the following example, an official in a social insurance provides the client with information in the written documents of the office on the current state of client’s pension application.

(9) [Kotus, T103:1 Social insurance office]

Official has fetched the client’s documents from an adjacent room, and reports when walking back:

01 Off:	<b>Joo elikkä tää-lä o-n ihan et o-n lähte-ny</b>
	PRT PRT DEM1-ADE be-3SG just that be-3SG go-PTCP.PST
	<b>Yes ELIKKÄ here's just that we have sent it</b>

02	<b>eteenpäin</b> ja odotta-a si-tä työ-eläke-päätös-tä.
	forward and waits-3SG DEM3-PAR work-pension-decision-PAR
	<b>forward</b> and it waits for the employment pension decision.

*Eli(kkä)* can also preface a turn that starts a new sequence and phase in a service encounter, such as the clerk giving the total price of purchases at a convenience store by saying *eli viistoista* ‘ELI fifteen’.

### 3.2 Prefacing a reformulation with eli(kkä)

As a preface to a reformulation, the kind of stance *elikkä* indexes differs from that indexed by *siis*. As compared to *siis*, *eli(kkä)* treats the co-

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<sup>11</sup> In the article on therapists’ formulations in cognitive therapy and psychoanalysis by Weiste and Peräkylä (2013), both of the examples shown in the category titled “rephrasing formulations” are *eli* prefaced; the prefates are not discussed in the article.

participant's prior turn and the reformulation offered as on a more equal epistemic footing than a *siis* preface.

In the following extract from a social insurance office, the official responds to the client's inquiry with a candidate understanding prefaced with *elikkä* by (lines 8–9).

(10) [Kotus T1093:1, Social insurance office; Cli = client, Off = official]

- 01 Cli: Päivää.  
Good day.
- 02 Off: Hyvä-ä °päivä-[ä°.   
good-PAR day-PAR  
Good °day°
- 03 Cli: [   
[.hh (0.3) Mull\_ on sellane 'asia   
I-ADE be.3SG DEM3.ADJ thing  
[.hhh (0.3) I have such a question
- 04 .hhh kun:: ↑autta-a-ko ne   
as help-3SG-Q DEM3.PL  
.hhh tha::t ↑do they help
- 05 **nu-i-ssa .hh saeraala-lasku-i-ssa** tiä-ltä   
DEM2.PL-INE hospital-bill-PL-INE DEM1.LOC-ABL  
with the .hh hospital bills here
- 06 **nu-i-ssa maksu-sa.**   
DEM2.PL-INE fee-INE  
with the fees.
- 07 (0.2) O looking at C, about to open his mouth; C  
looking at O
- 08 Off: => **Elikkä nä-i-ssä poliklinikka ja**   
PRT DEM1.PL-INE policlinic and  
**ELIKKÄ with these outpatient clinic and**
- 09 => **hoito-päivä-maksu-i-ssa.=**   
care-day-fee-PL-INE  
**bed-day fees.=**
- 10 Cli: -> =N*ii*.   
=Y*e*s.

11 Off: >nJoo. .hh nii-stä ei sairas-vakuutus-lain  
 PRT DEM3.PL-ELA NEG.3SG sick-insurance-law-GEN  
 >Yes. .hh they aren't according to the health insurance law

10 mukkaan korvata ---  
 according.to reimburse  
 reimbursed ---

The reformulation by the official responds to the client's inquiry about the availability of a particular type of assistance (service). The design of the client's turn proceeds from an initial formulation of the turn as one describing her reason for visiting the office, followed by an interrogatively formatted question about the availability of the service.<sup>12</sup> The object of help is described incrementally with two noun phrases, proceeding from naming a specific type of cost ('hospital bill') to its specification ('fees') (lines 5–6). Instead of answering the client's question straight away, the official initiates an insertion sequence that serves to clarify what the client referred to with her prior turn (lines 8–9). With his turn, the official rephrases the words of the client setting them within the institutional framework and terminology of health care services and social insurance. In line 10, the client confirms the understanding and the official proceeds to give an answer to the question.

Similar to the previous examples, here the candidate understanding is marked through a turn-initial particle, this time with *elikkä*, linking to the

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<sup>12</sup> The agent of the help is here formulated from the institutional point of view by using the plural demonstrative pronoun *ne*, which is used commonly in colloquial spoken language instead of 3rd person plural reference form *he* 'they'.

prior talk. And similar to example (5) above, where the speaker of the *siis*-prefaced turn reformulated a reference form referring to a mess kit with a more technical term, here the official in the social insurance office reformulates the document referred to by the client in an institutionally relevant fashion.

With his *elikkä* prefaced reformulation in example (10) (*Elikkä* ‘in these outpatient clinic and bed-day fees’), the official in the social insurance provides his understanding of the referents referred to by the client. By using the *elikkä* preface, he indexes that the subsequent talk will match what the client said but it reformulates it from another perspective. In so doing, he formulates the understanding as one that recognizes what the client said as an equally valid description of what is been talked about. At the same time he transforms the frame of talking about the issue. The official so-to-speak translates the client's description into a framework that is relevant for him in answering the client. As compared to the *siis*-prefaced reformulations we have seen, the *elikkä*-prefaced reformulation in example 10 does not contain any elements of uncertainty. The candidate understanding is confirmed by the client (*Nii.*, line 10), whereafter the official begins to answer the client's inquiry.

*Eli(kkä)* is also used as a preface when the turn verbalizes an implication of the prior speaker's turn. Also in such cases, the preface invokes certainty and equal epistemic weight of the formulation of the inference, and the subsequent explication of the understanding is devoid of

markers of uncertainty. Example (12) is an instance.<sup>13</sup> Satu is talking with her sister Mari about their travel schedules for their father's birthday celebrations. The *elikkä* prefaced inference is located in lines 13–14.

(11) [KA 074\_B1:3–4]

- 1 Mari: .mh Tai e-n tiiä jeä-p-kö se sitte  
or NEG-1SG know remain-3SG-Q DEM3 then  
.mh Or I don't know if it has to be left then
- 2 torsttae< (0.2) °oamu-päevvä-ä°.  
Thursday morning-day-ILL  
for Thursday< (0.2) °morning°.
- 3 (1.0)
- 4 Satu: => Ahah,  
I see,
- 5 (1.0)
- 6 Mari: Q Oo-t-ko-s sinä sitten millonka jo  
be-2SG-Q-CLI-CLI you-SG then when already  
When is it that you
- 7 lähö-ssä poe(k[kee]). ]  
going-INE away ]  
will be already going away ]  
[ ]
- 8 Satu: A-> [No ku mul ] o-is  
PRT since I-ADE] be-COND.3SG  
Well I'd have
- 9 -> perjantai-na tö-i:-tä?,  
Friday-ESS work-PL-PAR  
work on Friday
- 10 (0.4)
- 11 Mari: °Ai jaa:°.°  
°Oh I see:°.°
- 12 (3.1)

**13 Mari: => .hh Elikkä sinun pit:tää sillo jo**

<sup>13</sup> See Sorjonen (2001, 153–157) on this same sequence from the point of view of affiliative and non-affiliative responses.

PRT      you.SG-GEN   must          then          already  
**.hh   ELIKKÄ you must then**

**14            => torst<sup>o</sup>tai-na lähtte-e<sup>o</sup>. =**  
                  Thursday-ESS   leave-INF  
**leave already on Thursday=**

15 Satu: -> =Nii:.mhh .hhh Ja varmmaa niin se<      (.)  
                  PRT                   and probably      PRT      DEM3.GEN  
                  =Nii:.mhh .hhh And probably

16            juhla-häly-n jäläkkeen 0 n'nku lähtee-k(h)i  
                  party-fuss-GEN after                   0 like      leave.3SG-CLI  
                  after the party fuss 0 is als(h)o like

17            jo iha mielellää. .hhh=  
                  already just PRT  
                  quite happy to leave already. .hhh=

18 Mari:      =Joo[:.  
                  =Yeah

19 Satu:      [<sup>o</sup>Tai no e-n >tiiä<<sup>o</sup> .hhh Mut <sup>o</sup>toisaalta  
                  [ or PRT NEG-1SG know                   but ADV  
                  [<sup>o</sup>Or well I don't know<sup>o</sup> .hhh But <sup>o</sup>on the other hand

20            ol-is ihan kiva ol-la vähän pite-mppä-än mut  
                  be-COND.3SG just nice be-INF little long-COM-ILL but  
                  it would be just nice to stay a bit longer but ---

The *elikkä*-prefaced turn is located as part of a sequence and larger activity that has developed into a delicate one. When Mari mentions (lines 1–2) a possibility that she will arrive at their parents’ home and the celebration a day after the main celebration, it is first met with a silence and then treated as new information that would require re-orientation by Satu (line 4, *ahah*; Koivisto 2016). After another silence, Mari inquires about the time when Satu intends to leave (lines 6–7). Instead of providing a direct answer, Satu implies an answer by mentioning a commitment for the day following Mari’s day of arrival. This report is received by Mari as newsworthy and worthy of discussion (*ai jaa*, line 11; Koivisto 2016), its *sotto voce* delivery

indexing, I suggest, an orientation to the information as bad. After a substantial silence, Mari produces an *elikkä*-prefaced turn (lines 13–14).

The *elikkä* projects that a reformulation and paraphrase of some sort is upcoming based on Satu's turn. The rest of the turn explicates now the date of Satu's departure that Mari has inferred, offering the answer that Mari had sought with her inquiry. The turn formulates the date both as a necessity (*sinun pit:tää* 'you must') and early (*jo* 'already'). It thus presents in a matter-of-fact fashion the date from the prior speaker's point of view, but also implies its speaker's stance to the time of leaving ('early'). By prefacing the turn with *elikkä*, Mari can be heard as basing her understanding on a knowledge base equal to that of Satu, knowledge of when Satu would need to leave their parent's home to fulfil her commitment. She can also be heard to be focusing on her sister's decision as an obligation, rather than as a choice against spending more time with the family, and in so doing minimizing the delicacy of the situation (the sisters might not be able to see each other). The inference is confirmed by Satu (*Nii.*, line 15), who then moves to elaborate on her plan with an assessment and a further account of her departure time. Talk on the issue continues still for some time.

In sum, when a reformulation is prefaced with *eli(kkä)*, the unique characteristic of the preface is to index that the turn will present a reformulation of the other's prior talk such that the offered reformulation has equal epistemic weight to what the co-participant said in the sense that



*elikkä* projects an equally valid formulation of what the co-participant said but in other words and from a different perspective. There were no severe problems of understanding by the *elikkä* speaker of the kind found in the previously discussed cases that contained a *siis*-prefaced turn. In the *eli(kkä)*-prefaced cases just analysed, the turn targeted in one case the reference forms that were central for the on-going activity (ex. (10)), and in the other case the implication of the entire turn was left by the prior speaker to be inferred by the recipient, the *elikkä* speaker (ex. (11)). In both cases the prior turn was produced in a rather straightforward fashion, without elements conveying uncertainty.

#### **4. *Nii(n) et(tä)* -prefacing**

##### *4.1 Background*

The kind of indexing *nii(n) et(tä)*<sup>14</sup> does when prefacing a reformulation relates to the larger family of usages its elements are engaged in. Thus the initial *nii* is a derivative of the demonstrative *se* ‘it; that’ which is the main element of anaphora in Finnish; *nii* is the plural form of *se* in the instrumental (instructive) case, meaning approximately ‘so; in that way’ in

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<sup>14</sup> The elements in the parenthesis, the final *-n* in *niin*, and the second and last syllable *-tä* in *että*, are often dropped in colloquial language.

English. It is also used as a response particle (e.g. to confirm, or to display agreement, or to work as a continuer; Sorjonen 2001). *Et*, on the other hand, is used as a particle in utterance-initial or utterance-final position, coming close to 'so' in English, but is also a conjunction (complementizer, often to introduce reported speech) (Laury and Seppänen 2008; Koivisto, Laury, and Seppänen 2011). Prior studies on spoken interaction describe *et(tä)* as an index to an introduction of another voice, common to its use both as a conjunction and a particle (Laury and Seppänen 2008, 197). Furthermore, relatedly, it is characterized as an element that both links back (making relevant some prior talk) and projects forward (what is to come is a paraphrase, a candidate understanding or an upshot of that prior talk) in all its contexts of use (a complementizer, and an initial and final particle) (Koivisto et al. 2011, 71).

#### 4.2 Prefacing a reformulation with *nii(n) et(tä)*

When prefacing a reformulation of the prior speaker's turn, *nii(n) et(tä)* - initial turns resemble some usages of *eli(kkä)* prefaced turns, as they explicate something that was implied by the prior speaker. The *nii(n) et(tä)* prefaced reformulations, however, differ from the ones prefaced by *eli(kkä)* (and *siis*) in that in the database the reformulation is always clause formatted. The epistemic stance projected by *nii että* differs from the one projected by *eli* in that *nii että* indexes a less than certain epistemic stance

by the speaker, coming closer to *siis* in the epistemic stance indexed.

However, in contrast to *siis*, the features of *nii(n)* and *et(tä)* contribute to the sense of the preface as suggesting that the reformulation will be based on the prior speaker's words.

In the following extract, the *nii(n) et(tä)* -prefaced turn explicates something that was not expressed in the prior turn but was treated by its speaker as recognizable to the *nii(n) et(tä)* -speaker. Leena has called her fellow student Taru to tell her that the textbooks she has ordered on behalf of the class have arrived and are more expensive than was expected. After Taru's assurance of Leena getting her money, Leena (line 5) moves to initiate a new topical line with a *mut* -but' prefaced TCU that voices a complaint and regret concerning a past event ('afterwards').

(12) [KA Sg s18 b\_01:1–2, telephone, Spout]

- 01 Leena: Mut mä nyt sit yritä-n kyni-ä myös Merja-lta  
but I now then try-1SG dig.out-INF also 1NAME.F-ABL  
But I'll try then to dig out the money also from Merja
- 02 ja Ruuti-lta.h[hh .hh ne rahat. mhh .mt=  
and 1NAME.F-ABL DEM3.PL money  
and Ruut .hh .tch=  
[
- 03 Taru: [Joo:.  
[Yes
- 04 Taru: =↑No hyvä. Kyl-hän siin on ny jotaki.  
PRT good surely-CLI DEM3.INE be.3SG now something  
=↑Well good. There's y'know surely something
- 05 Leena: -> .nh mJoo:.hh .hhh h mutta nyt, hh nyt mä oo-n  
PRT but now now I be-1SG  
.nh Yea: .hhh but now, hh now I have
- 06 -> niinku ruen' jälkeenkäi- päin tää ruven-nu  
PRT started aftermath wards DEM1 start-PTCP.PST  
like started aftermath- wards this started to

07           -> harmittaa et .hh  
               annoy           that  
               be annoyed that .hh

08           -> **p*it*-i-k-s   mu-n auko-o pää-tä-ni.**  
               have.to-PST-Q   I-GEN   open-INF   head-PAR-1SG.POS  
               did I have to (mouth off)/(keep on opposing)

09           (0.5)

10 **Taru:   => Nii et tila-ta ne       vai,**  
               PRT   PRT   order-INF   DEM3.PL   or  
               **Nii   ET to order them or,**

11           (.)

12 **Taru:   => vai mikä.=**  
               or   what=

13 Leena: -> =.mt No   ei::-ku tuo-l   ryhmä-ohjaukse-s tänää.  
               PRT   NEG-PRT   DEM2-ADE   group-advising-INE   today  
               =.tch NO no I mean there in the group training today

14 Taru:       >Miten nii:.<  
               how so

Instead of displaying some kind of affiliation made relevant by the prior turn, Taru – after a possibly problem-indicative silence (line 9) – responds with a *nii(n) et(tä)* -prefaced reformulation of the latter TCU of Leena's turn. With her turn, she explicates her understanding of the ordering of the books as the source and object of Leena's annoyance and regret (on non-prefaced cases of such turns, see Hayashi and Hayano 2013). The reformulation displays less than certain epistemic stance, due to a finally positioned *vai* that projects an alternative to come, and after a brief silence, she completes (line 12) the structure with a question word (*mikä* 'what', nominative case) with a repetition of the final *vai* 'or', making it relevant for

the co-participant to produce a possible alternative. In this case, the offered understanding is rejected by the recipient (line 13).

Here the design and consequently the assumptions of the target of the reformulation turned out to be problematic. The shift to a new topic with a *mut* 'but' prefaced TCU (line 5) continued the pitch level of the preceding acknowledgement. The other design features also worked to the same direction: the *mut* 'but' preface indexed a contrastive line of talk to come but not a clear topic shift, and the subsequent talk did not contain elements that verbalized the shift. While the turn treated the recipient as knowledgeable of the issue, for the recipient it caused a problem. By prefacing her reformulation with *nii(n) et(tä)* Taru can be heard to be indexing that she is basing her turn on the words by Leena, and in so doing subtly implies the wording as a source of uncertainty for her.

In the following example, the *nii(n) et(tä)* prefaced turn responds to a prior turn that gave a vague and unspecific answer to the *nii(h) et(tä)* - speaker's request for information, and it explicates an implication in that answer. As a response to Meeri's informing about placing orders of honey with the local beekeeper, Tuula, after a display of some interest, inquires about the specific time that orders should be placed (*millos se on* 'when is it', line 8). The turn makes relevant an answer that provides, for example, a particular time (day, time) for placing the order, or a deadline for ordering.

(13) [KA SG 098 B\_01, telephone]

01 Meeri: Nyt-pä on muuten tuo:ta toi hunaja'  
 now-CLI be.3SG by.the.way PRT DEM3 honey.GEN  
 By the way now it's the time y'know for the honey

02 haku et mä en tiiä oo-tte-k-s te (.)  
 fetching PRT I NEG-1SG know be-2PL-Q-CLI you.PL  
 fetching so I don't know whether you ((PL)) have (.)

03 ollu kiinnostune-i-ta yleensä  
 be-PPC interested-PL-PAR generally  
 generally been interested in

04 [otta-ma-an. ]  
 [ take-INF-ILL ]  
 [ taking ((some)) ]  
 [ ]

05 Tuula: [Ai:< ↑Joo mä oo-n] j<sub>o</sub>skus otta-nu ja  
 [PRT PRT I be-1 ] sometimes take-PTCP.PST and  
 [Oh: ↑yeah I have ] occasionally taken some and

06 Meeri: [°(Joo::)° ]  
 [°(Yea::)° ]  
 [ ]

07 Tuula: [kyllä 0 näköjää:n] vo-is ajatel-la.=e  
 [PRT PRT ] can-COND.3SG think-INF  
 0 surely could appa:rently think about it.=e

08 -> millos se on.  
 when-CLI DEM3 is  
 when is it.

09 Meeri: -> No< se o-is itse asiassa nyt aika  
 PRT DEM3 be-COND.3SG actually now quite  
 NO< actually it's just about

10 -> ↓kii:rek-ki jo.hh jos,  
 hurry-CLI already if  
 the time already.hh if,

11 Tuula: => Nii et[tä 0 o-is pitä-ny jo ilmotta-a  
 PRT PRT be-COND.3SG must-PTCP.PST already let.know-INF  
 NII ET[TÄ 0 should already have signed up

[  
 12 Meeri: [ (-) -

13 Tuula: => [vai, ]  
 [or, ]  
 [ ]

14 Meeri: -> [↑Nii:h ] >kyllä v- periaattee-ssa niinku  
 [ PRT ] PRT ? principle-INE PRT  
 [↑Yes ] yes in principle like

15 -> juhannukse-en mennessä mut että nyt jos .hh

midsummer-ILL      by      but      PRT      now      if  
 by Midsummer but so now if .hh  
 16      -> .mt tä-ssä hetkinen: e kolmastoista päivä ---  
                  DEM1-INE moment      thirteenth      day  
                  .tch around just a moment er on the thirteenth ---

The answer is started with the particle *no* which projects a departure from expectations that the inquiry has set (Sorjonen and Vepsäläinen 2016; Vepsäläinen in preparation). Instead of providing a precise time, Meeri implies that there is not much time left, and she frames her answer as revising something in her prior talk and/or her co-participant's understanding of that prior talk (*itse asiassa* 'actually; as a matter of fact'; Clift 2001 on *actually* in English).

In her *nii että* prefaced turn, Tuula explicates the implication that she heard in Meeri's answer a "worst case" scenario: the signing up should have been done already. The turn is finished with the particle *vai* 'or' which plays down the certainty of the inference (Koivisto 2017; see Lindström 1997, ch. 3 on Swedish; Drake 2015 on English). The first response by Meeri is a confirmation (*Nii:h*, line 14), making the understanding offered by Tuula shared. However, Meeri then proceeds to an elaboration that relativizes the confirmation and displays the relevance of having taken up the topic. From that she then moves to provide a deadline for placing the order (lines 15–16).

The *nii et* is also used in potentially delicate situations to explicate something that the prior speaker left unsaid in her or his turn. The following

extract is such a case. Lasse, who is vicar of the local congregation, is calling Veera to inquire about the celebration of Veera's elderly sister's birthday. Veera's answer to this inquiry is responded to by Lasse with a *nii et* -prefaced reformulation (lines 16–17).

(14) [SKK Sg 142 2a7, telephone]

- 01 Lasse: .hh .hh rupes-i-n soitt-ele-ma-an< (0.2)  
start-PST-1SG call-FRE-INF-ILL  
 .hh .hh I started to call< (0.2)
- 02 semmos-ta< ä °mhh° juttu-a kun .mhh huama-si-n  
DEM3.ADJ-PAR thing-PAR as notice-PST-1SG  
 such er °mhh° thing as .mhh I noticed
- 03 että °.hh° Reetta hh täytt-el-is (.) vuos-i-a.=hh  
that 1NAME.F full-FRE-PST.3SG year-PL-PAR  
 that °.hh° Reetta hh would (.) have a birthday
- 04 .hh Lun- (.) Lundeli-n (.) Reetta.=hhh (.)  
2NAME-GEN 1NAME.F  
 .hh Lun- (.) Lundel (.) Reetta.=hhh (.)
- 05 .h[hh  
 [  
 06 Veera: [joo.  
 [yeah
- 07 Lasse: niin tota ↑tiiä-k-s sää yhtää että o-n-k-s  
PRT PRT know-Q-CLI you.SG at.all COMP be-3SG-Q-CLI  
 so um ↑do you know at all whether
- 08 ↑häm ↓paika-m päällä ja (.) viett-ele-e-kö,  
3SG.HUM place-GEN on and celebrate-FRE-3SG-Q  
 she will be around and (.) will she celebrate,
- 09 Veera: -> °.hhh° no[::] ] hän o-n niinku kutsu-nu  
PRT 3SG.HUM be-3SG PRT invite-PTCP.PST  
 °.hhh° well she has like invited  
 [ ]
- 10 Lasse: [vielä]  
 still
- 11 Veera: -> sisko-t ja velje-t o-n káske-ny  
sister-PL and brother-PL be-3SG ask-PTCP.PST  
 ((her)) sisters and brothers has asked



12           -> mut ei                 s[e sunkas<,]  
                but NEG.3SG DEM3 PRT  
                but I don't suppose she has  
                                    [                     ]  
13 Lasse:                             [mut ei,         ]  
                                    [but not            ]  
  
14           ( . )  
  
15 Veera: -> n[ii:.  
                yes  
                [  
16 Lasse:       [se    nii että hän       niinku viättä-ä   vähä  
                     DEM3 PRT PRT 3SG.HUM PRT celebrate-3SG little  
                [she    NII ETTÄ she like celebrates it a bit  
17               sillai hiljasuud[e-ssa s]i-tä.=  
                 DEM3.MAN silence-INE               DEM3-PAR  
                like on the quiet.                       =  
                                    [                     ]  
18 Veera:                             [nii.            ]  
                                    [yes               ]  
  
19 Lasse:       =.h[hh j]oo si-tä mä-ki aattel-i että  
                                 PRT DEM3-PAR I-CLI think-PST.1SG COMP  
                =hhh yeah that's what I ((thought)) too that  
                                 [                     ]  
20 Veera:                             [°mm:°.]  
  
21 Lasse:       tuota,=  
                 PRT  
                um=  
22 Veera:       =mj[o.  
                =yeah  
                 [  
23 Lasse:       [.hh 0 täytyy vähä ny .mhhhhth täyty ny  
                                 have.to little PRT have.to PRT  
                [.hh 0 has now a bit to .mhhhhth had now  
24               vähä niinku sisko-lta kys-el-lä että °tuota°,  
                 little PRT sister-ABL ask-FRE-INF COMP PRT  
                like ask the sister a bit that um  
25 Veera:       jo[o.  
                yeah.  
                [  
26 Lasse:       [.mhh että (0.2) minkälainen (.) suunnitelma  
                                 [.mhh that (0.2) what kind of (.) plan  
27               hänellä on että (.) että tiätää sitte.  
                she has so that (.) one knows then

Veera (line 9) starts her answer with a lengthened particle *no* pushing the core of the answer further into the turn, and indexing a departure from some expectations of the prior turn. At this point, Lasse displays his assumption that there might be no celebration by adding an increment, the adverb *vielä* ‘still’ to his turn (line 10), hearable as responsive to *no*. Veera then moves to provide information that indicates that her sister will celebrate her birthday. However, the ones who have been invited are specified as family members (sisters and brothers), whereafter Veera expresses her assumption that no others have been invited – not saying it in so many words but leaving her turn unfinished (line 12, ‘I don’t suppose she has’). Even though leaving the turn unfinished may relate to Lasse responding to the answer in overlap (line 13), it conveys the gist of a potentially delicate answer. It is a quite common practice that when a member of the congregation celebrates big (round) birthdays (70, 80, etc. years), the vicar will visit the celebrant. With her answer Veera is making it understood that no others, not even the vicar, will be welcome to the party.

With his *nii(n) et(tä)* prefaced reformulation Lasse explicates Veera’s implication but formulates it with a conventional phrase *viettä hiljaisuudessa* (‘spend quietly’; ‘celebrate quietly’), used for events such as birthdays, funerals, religious retreats and such. By designing his turn in this way Lasse is able to present his understanding of the manner of celebration in a positive way from the point of view of the celebrant, and as a socially acceptable and normal practice. At the same time this design serves to wipe

away any orientation by Veera to the dispreference of her answer. By using the *nii(n) et(tä)* preface instead of *eli(kkä)*, Lasse links his turn back to Veera's wordings, and in doing so displays that Veera is here the epistemic authority. Had he used *eli(kkä)*, he would have indexed equal epistemic access to the issue. Veera aligns with Lasse's epistemic stance by providing confirmation with the response token *nii* (line 18, see Sorjonen 2001, 58–64). After that, in lines 19 and 21, Lasse discloses that he had similar thoughts about the situation, but then revises his turn into one that states again his need to consult the sister of the celebrant. The talk about the celebration continues for another couple of turns (Veera telling about the place of the celebration), whereafter Lasse initiates another topic.

The *nii(n) et(tä)* preface thus indexes that the turn just started links back to the previous talk and in the cases discussed, to the previous turn by the co-participant. It also projects that a reformulation is to come and that reformulation is based on the co-participant's wordings. In the excerpts discussed, that kind of indexing was deployed when the prior turn by the co-participant concerned an issue that belonged to the co-participant's epistemic territory (Heritage 2012a; b), specifically providing information to the *nii(n) et(tä)* speaker (the co-participant complaining about her own conduct, ex. (12); when to sign up for getting honey, ex. (13)), but information presented vaguely or unclearly to the extent that it leads to *niin et* -prefaced formulation of an inferred reformulation by the recipient. We also saw that the *nii et* preface can be used strategically in situations where

the speaker needs to ascertain something about which she or he is rather sure (ex. (15)).

Similar to *siis* and *eli(kkä)*, the *nii(n) et(tä)* preface connects the turn to the other speaker's prior talk, and it projects a reformulation of that prior talk to come. The work it does is similar to that done by the *siis* preface in that in both cases, the preface contributes to and intensifies the epistemic stance of uncertainty that a mere production of a reformulation and features of turn design such as interrogative elements display. However, *nii(n) et(tä)*-prefaced reformulations occur in sequential contexts where the talk that the reformulation targets is formulated vaguely, ambiguously or in some other way unclearly, whereas *siis* prefaced reformulations target more clearly repair related phenomena such as difficulty in understanding reference forms.

## **5. Discussion**

When seeking shared, intersubjective understanding by presenting a reformulation of what the prior speaker just said, speakers have available a range of ways of designing such an action. The first place for implementing different designs is the beginning of the turn. One major option there is whether to start the turn without any prefacing or with a preface. The quantification by Haakana et al. (2016) shows that in Finnish conversation,

candidate understandings (discussed as part of reformulations in the present study) are overwhelmingly prefaced by a particle or particle chain. This chapter has discussed the use of three different turn-initial particles prefacing a reformulation in Finnish conversation, *siis*, *eli(kkä)* and *nii(n) et(tä)*.

The kinds of actions analyzed in this chapter, reformulations, are inherently responsive to their prior talk, be they prefaced with a particle or not. In that sense, they link back to their prior talk and they make projections for the talk to come. When prefacing a reformulation with a particle, the speaker brings to the turn something beyond its sequential placement and core design. The kind of contribution that all three of the prefaces analyzed bring to the turns and actions is an expression of epistemic stance, a preliminary display and harbinger of the extent of the speaker's knowledge or certainty about the reformulation to come in its specific sequential context.

We have seen that what unites these three prefaces is that they all indicate a link to the prior talk by the co-participant. In the case of *siis* and *nii(n) et(tä)* this force of indexing can be thought of as relating to their anaphoric traces. At the same time, all the prefaces are, first, generally forward-looking by being turn-initial elements that are not capable of forming a TCU on their own. Second, they are forward-looking by projecting that the subsequent talk in the TCU will offer a reformulation of the co-participant's prior talk.

We have also seen that as turn-initial prefaces they all participate in expressing their speaker's epistemic stance. However they contextualize the turn and action they have started differently. Thus, while the turn each of them prefaces makes minimally a confirmation or disconfirmation relevant by the co-participant, and consequently orients to the co-participant as having a say in the matter, they index a different kind of epistemic stance with respect to the relationship between the prior speaker's talk and the reformulation offered. While *eli(kkä)* treats the reformulation offered as being of an equal epistemic weight with what the co-participant said, both the *siis* and *nii(n) et(tä)* prefaces orient to the situation epistemically as more asymmetric: they treat the understanding offered as less certain. *Siis* and *nii(n) et(tä)*, on the other hand, differ in terms of the basis of the reformulation. *Siis* indexes that the reformulation has resulted from an inferencing process which has progressed while the co-participant's turn or longer stretch of talk has unfolded through revisions or incrementally. We also saw that related to this, the *siis*-prefaced reformulation can condense the co-participant's turn into one noun phrase that expresses an inference from what the co-participant referred to over a more extended turn or turns. *Siis*-prefaced reformulations can also work in the opposite way and seek understanding of referring expressions that the co-participant assumed as known to the *siis* speaker by unpacking the reference form in what are assumed to be its formative constituents.

Quite a different kind interactive role is played by the *nii(n) et(tä)* preface, which indexes that the reformulation to come is based on the words of the prior speaker. This kind of stance taking was found in sequential contexts of a vague or ambiguous nature that hindered the recipient from acting in the on-going interaction on a relevant way. In such cases indexing that the reformulation is based on the co-participant's words can be a way of providing support for one's interpretation.

The epistemic assumptions displayed in the turn that is the target of reformulation can vary accordingly. *Eli(kkä)*-prefaced turns in the data respond to turns that rely on the *eli(kkä)* speaker's knowledge of the relevant aspects of what was said, and the design of the *eli(kkä)*-prefaced reformulation aligns with that. The *nii(n) et(tä)* -prefaced formulations, on the other hand, respond to prior turns in ways that treat the speaker of that prior turn as more knowledgeable (having epistemic authority). However, the design of the prior turn is not informative enough for the recipient, and that is indicated by the recipient in the preface of her turn and the entire reformulation. Finally, the prior talk targeted by the *siis*-prefaced reformulations varied.

The prefacing of a reformulation is optional, and there is also a possibility to select from the prefaces. For example, prefacing the reformulation with the particle *eli(kkä)* and indexing that the reformulation has an equal epistemic weight may be deployed to downplay the possible

repair relevance of the prior speaker's action in an institutional setting, or to display one's close relationship with the co-participant.

These aspects of sustaining intersubjectivity are neither topicalized nor repaired – the particles are non-referential, relational indexes that tie actions together and in so doing display their speakers' stance at the moment of their production. They are resources for subtle actions, deepening the dimensions of meaning making in the course of interaction.

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